

# X-FACTOR

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DAVID  
SOOK  
CALLERO  
VON GRAWBADGER  
VILLARRUBIA



DIRECT EDITION

**RATED T+**



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IN A SOCIETY WHERE MUTANTS AND FORMER MUTANTS ALIKE FEEL THREATENED BY THE WORLD AROUND THEM, THEY TURN TO THEIR FIRST, BEST LINE OF DEFENSE: WHENEVER TROUBLE ARISES, X-FACTOR, THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY FOUNDED BY MADROX THE MULTIPLE MAN.

# X-FACTOR



SIRYN'S INVESTIGATION INTO A CRIME LORD GOES OFF THE RAILS WHEN HER SOURCE—A YOUNG WOMAN NAMED VICKY, SEDUCED BY THE SOUND OF SIRYN'S MIND-CONTROLLING VOICE—IS GUNNED DOWN BY AN ASSASSIN WHO SUBSEQUENTLY KILLS HERSELF TO AVOID CAPTURE. AT X-FACTOR HEADQUARTERS, STRONG GUY IS ABOUT TO TELL SIRYN THAT THE ASSASSIN WAS WORKING FOR A RIVAL, HIGH-POWERED DETECTIVE AGENCY CALLED SINGULARITY INVESTIGATIONS...UNTIL HE IS UPSTAGED BY A STRANGE GIRL NAMED LAYLA MILLER WHO BLUTHELY INFORMS THEM THAT SHE'S NOW WORKING FOR X-FACTOR.

MEANTIME, IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE DECIMATION, A DEPOWERED AND SUICIDALLY DEPRESSED RICTOR IS PERCHED ON A LEDGE READY TO JUMP TO HIS DEATH. JAMIE MADROX, THE MULTIPLE MAN, HAS DISPATCHED ONE OF HIS DUPES—AN UPBEAT OPTIMIST—TO TALK RICTOR OUT OF THIS TERMINAL DECISION. BUT THINGS GO HORRIBLY WRONG WHEN THE BELIEVED OPTIMIST TURNS OUT TO BE A "WILD CARD" VERSION OF JAMIE WHO LOVES TO RUN COUNTER TO EXPECTATIONS...AND SHOVES RICTOR OFF THE LEDGE HIMSELF.

**WRITER**  
PETER DAVID

**PENCILERS**  
RYAN SOOK &  
DENNIS CALLERO

**INKERS**  
WADE VON CRAWBADGER &  
DENNIS CALLERO

**COLOR ART**  
JOSE VILLARRUBIA

**LETTERS**  
VC'S CORY PETIT

**PRODUCTION**  
BRAD JOHANSEN

**ASSISTANT EDITORS**  
MOLLY LAZER &  
AUBREY SITTERSON

**EDITOR**  
ANDY SCHMIDT

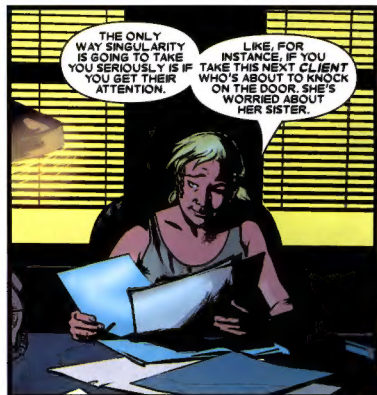
**EDITOR IN CHIEF**  
JOE QUESADA

**PUBLISHER**  
DAN BUCKLEY

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# STAR POWER



GET  
BACK! GET  
BACK!

LEMME  
GO! I'LL SAVE  
HIM--!

YOU  
CAN'T!

THIS IS MADNESS.  
MADNESS!

I SENT ONE OF MY DUPLICATES TO  
TRY AND TALK RICTOR DOWN FROM  
A LEDGE. RICTOR, WHO WANTED TO  
KILL HIMSELF BECAUSE  
HE LOST HIS MUTANT ABILITIES...

...ALONG WITH NINETY  
PERCENT OF THE KNOWN  
MUTANT POPULATION.

AND INSTEAD OF HELPING HIM,  
MY FREAKING DUPLICATE SHOVED  
RICTOR OFF HIS PERCH!

HOW COULD I HAVE  
MISCALCULATED  
SO BADLY?

LEGGO OR  
I'LL BLOODY  
KILL YE!!!

OH GOD...  
SHE'S NOT  
GOING TO  
MAKE IT...

RELAX,  
SHAKY. I'VE  
GOT YOU.

OOOOFF!!!





MONEY?!?


MAIS OUI.

DON'T  
WORRY, RAHNE. I  
HAVE MATTERS IN HAND.  
RICTOR AND I ARE GOING  
TO GO SOMEPLACE  
PRIVATE AND TALK  
NOW.

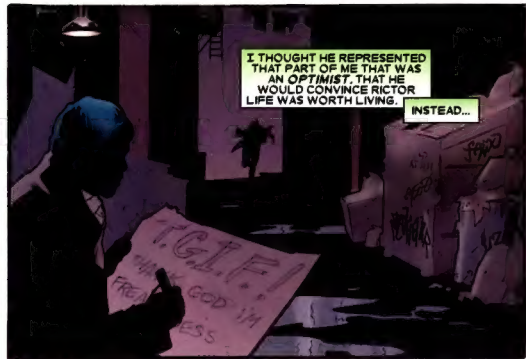
BY THE  
WAY...

...LOVE WHAT  
YOU'VE DONE WITH  
THE FUR. NEW FLEA  
TREATMENT?

GRRRRRRR...



STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW IT'S POSSIBLE.



I THOUGHT HE REPRESENTED THAT PART OF ME THAT WAS AN OPTIMIST. THAT HE WOULD CONVINCE RICTOR LIFE WAS WORTH LIVING.

INSTEAD...




UH-OH. BUSSSSSTED.




HOW COULD YOU--!

HOW COULD I WHAT?



TOTALLY FOOL YOU? DUDE...EVERYBODY IN THE WORLD OCCASIONALLY DECEIVES HIMSELF. LIES TO HIMSELF. WHENEVER YOU'RE KIDDING YOURSELF...I'M THE ONE DOING THE KIDDING.

THAT'S WHAT I AM. WHO I AM.



I'M THE PART OF YOU THAT CAN'T BE TRUSTED.





AND MAN, IT IS GREAT BREATHING THE FREE AIR AT LAST! I'VE BEEN DYING TO GET OUT!

YEAH? WELL YOU'RE GOING BACK!



FOR HOW LONG? DUDE, YOU CAN'T STUFF THE GENIE BACK IN THE BOTTLE.

SHOVE ME AWAY AS DEEP AS YOU WANT. I'LL GET BACK OUT, SOONER OR LATER, AND YOU'LL NEVER KNOW WHEN IT'S ME.



OH, I'LL KNOW. I'LL KNOW ENOUGH NEVER TO LET YOU OUT AGAIN.



OH YEAH? YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME!

YEAH? WELL, IF NOT ME, THEN WHO IS?



WELL, THAT'S THE QUESTION, ISN'T IT?

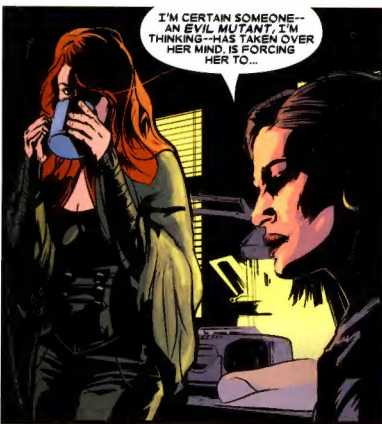
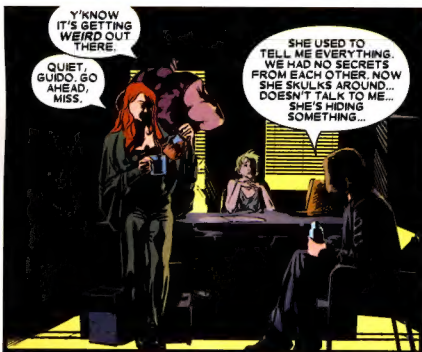


YOU STILL A MUTANT?

OBVIOUSLY, YOU?

NOT ANYMORE. GOD LOVES ME.

GOOD. THEN ASK HIM WHAT I DID TO PISS HIM OFF, WOULD'JA?





SIRYN...  
YOU SAID YOU  
WANTED  
SINGULARITY?  
SHE'S WHERE  
YOU START



AND YOU  
KNOW THIS  
BECAUSE...?

I TOLD YOU.  
I'M LAYLA MILLER.  
I KNOW STUFF.

UH-HUH,  
WHAT KIND OF  
"STUFF?"

ALL  
KINDS.

AND HOW  
DO YOU KNOW  
THIS "STUFF?"

BECAUSE...



...YOU'RE  
LAYLA  
MILLER.

YES!  
EXACTLY!  
NOW YOU'RE  
GETTING IT.

IF "IT" IS  
A MASSIVE  
HEADACHE,  
THEN YES.



YOU KNOW  
WHAT? FINE.  
WE'LL DO IT.  
I'LL DO IT.

GIVE ME ALL  
THE PERTINENT  
INFO ABOUT YOUR  
SISTER YOU CAN, AND  
I'LL HANDLE IT  
FROM HERE.

WHY  
THE CHANGE  
OF HEART,  
SY?



BECAUSE I'M FIGURING  
THIS "SINGULARITY" ISN'T  
GOING ANYWHERE, AND IF  
THIS CASE BRINGS ME  
FACE TO FACE WITH  
THEM...



"... THEN  
IT WORKS  
FOR ME "





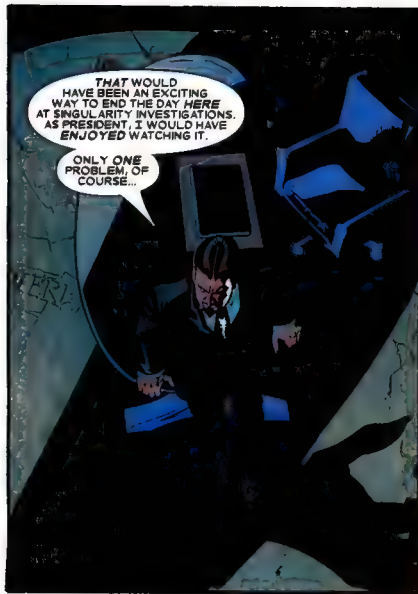
"NOT MUCH OF A CHORE,  
REALLY. A SIMPLE NULL  
FIELD TO ABSORB AND  
DEADEN SIRYN'S VOCAL  
POWERS..."



"AND SOME  
MARKSMEN DO  
THE REST."



"SO MUCH  
FOR SIRYN."



THAT WOULD  
HAVE BEEN AN EXCITING  
WAY TO END THE DAY HERE  
AT SINGULARITY INVESTIGATIONS.  
AS PRESIDENT, I WOULD HAVE  
ENJOYED WATCHING IT.

ONLY ONE  
PROBLEM, OF  
COURSE...



SHE  
DIDN'T SHOW  
UP.

NO.  
MR. TRYP, SHE  
DIDN'T.

ANY  
SPECULATION  
AS TO WHY THAT  
MIGHT BE?



SOME NEW  
ELEMENT MUST HAVE  
BEEN INTRODUCED THAT'S  
ALTERED EVENTS AS I  
RECALL THEM.

WHAT SORT,  
OLD MAN? A ONE-  
TIME EVENT? A  
PERSON?

HARD TO SAY.  
THE "DECIMATION"  
WAS A PERIOD OF  
GREAT TEMPORAL  
CONFUSION.

TO SAY NOTHING  
OF GRAMMATICAL  
CONFUSION, SINCE THE  
MUTANT POPULATION  
WAS REDUCED BY NINETY  
PERCENT BUT "DECIMATE"  
MEANS REDUCE BY  
ONE-TENTH.

YES,  
WELL...GO  
ARGUE WITH  
THE MEDIA.





DOES IT AFFECT WHAT HAPPENS WITH MADROX? HE'S FAR TOO IMPORTANT IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS TO BECOME AN UNCERTAINTY NOW.

I TOLD YOU: I DON'T KNOW



YOU PICKED A POOR TIME TO BECOME INDECISIVE, OLD MAN.

YOU TOLD ME THAT, AS A RESULT OF X-FACTOR'S ACTIONS...

THE DISENFRANCHISED MUTANTS WOULD BE RE-EMPOWERED, YES. WHICH WOULD NATURALLY PUT US IN OPPOSITION TO MADROX AND HIS ASSOCIATES.

BUT IF THINGS HAVE CHANGED...WHO KNOWS? IT COULD BE. X-FACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO...

...UNLESS WE INTERFERE WITH THEM. SO WE COULD WIND UP CUTTING OUR OWN THROATS.

THEORETICALLY.



WONDERFUL.

LOOK, OLD MAN, SORT MATTERS OUT ON YOUR END AND GET BACK TO ME WITH BETTER INTEL. ALL RIGHT?

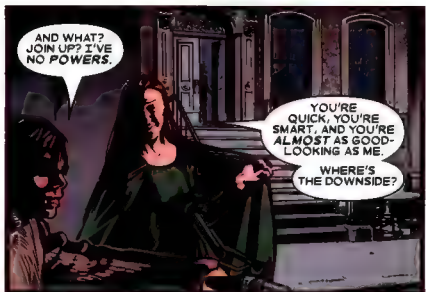
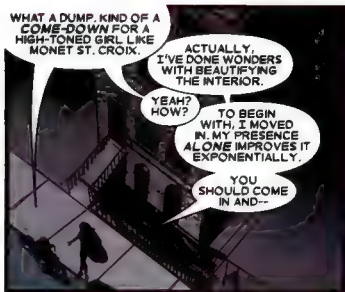
A LITTLE RESPECT, TRYP. I'M NOT YOUR MESSENGER BOY.

SORT MATTERS OUT, PRETTY PLEASE WITH SUGAR ON IT.

BETTER.

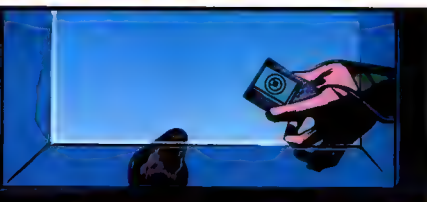


WHY DOES BEING EVIL NEED TO BE THIS MUCH WORK?









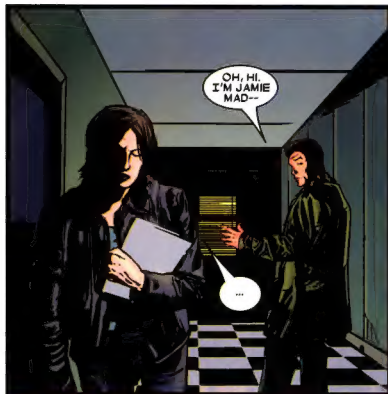


















# X-FACTOR

## NEXT ISSUE:

Hi. Peter David here, and honestly, I can scarcely believe it. When Andy Schmidt first talked to me about launching a five issue MADROX limited series with an eye toward continuing with X-FACTOR if the demand warranted, the notion of the ongoing series seemed a pipe dream. It's not as if fans had been demanding a film noir detective take on a C-level mutant character like Jamie Madrox, no matter how much Andy and I loved the character.

Except I'd forgotten the truism that fans don't really know what they want until it's given to them. *Star Wars* was expected to flop back in 1977 because there was nothing else like it out there. Who knew?

Well, you guys knew, as it turned out. From the very end of MADROX to the first announcement of the new series, fans kept saying, "We loved MADROX, and we want X-FACTOR!" And here it is, along with our first actual letters page. Text has been edited for space, but no opinions have been altered:

To: Andy Schmidt,

I would like to thank you for your great work on the MADROX series. I haven't bought a comic book, much less followed a series since I was 12. I guess that was around 1994. Man! That was a long time ago.

I would like to say "THANK YOU" for bringing back in me the joy of reading comics. Something that I once had when I was still a kid. Even if it's only good for 5 issues, I am happy to have experienced it.

Michael Edillor  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
Canada

And we're glad to have provided the experience for you, Michael...while being able to continue Madrox's further adventures.

Dear Marvel:

On the last pages of MADROX #5 Strong Guy was wearing an anti-Republican shirt. I've read almost every comic that Guido is in and I don't see this as in-character at all. I don't see how it advances the plot. I am an avid follower of politics but when I read a comic like MADROX I'm looking to get away from that sort of thing. I see it as a cheap attempt by the creative team to inject their political point of view for no reason. I've been to Mr. David's blog and I know what his political views are. I've never had a problem because I expected him to keep his personal views out of his professional work. Now that I have to see his political views while reading his books I can't enjoy his work as much.

Ryan Johnson  
(Via E-mail)

Actually, Ryan, I had nothing to do with Guido's apparel; it was the artist's notion. Not that I'm opposed to giving characters viewpoints about the real world. After all, should we drop all of Rahne's devotion to God if we get an angry letter from an atheist who feels we're shoving religion in his face? We start second guessing ourselves, and we'll be getting letters complaining the characters have become too bland. Hardly an improvement.

Dear X-Factor team:

I have just seen the new artwork for the upcoming ongoing series X-FACTOR and can honestly not wait for it to come out! X-FACTOR is going to be awesome, I just know it!

Keep bringing out the hits, Marvel!!!

Tim Blanchard  
(Via E-mail)

Only if you keep buying them, Tim.

-PAD



MOLLY LAZER  
ASST. EDITOR

AUBREY SITTERSON  
ASST. EDITOR

ANDY SCHMIDT  
EDITOR

JOE QUESADA  
CHIEF

X-FACTOR C/O MARVEL COMICS  
417 5TH AVE., NEW YORK, NY 10016

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